

Applic. No. 10/776,361

Amdt. dated January 6, 2006

Reply to Office action of October 6, 2005

Claim Amendments

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claim 1 (currently amended): An apparatus for conveying sheets to a sheet processing machine, comprising:

a feed table;

at least one suction belt disposed to be guided over said feed table and to be subjected to suction air from an underside thereof;

said at least one suction belt having at least two mutually spaced-apart rows of suction openings formed therein and a continuous region, substantially without any openings, between said spaced-apart rows of suction openings; and

said feed table having ventilation openings formed therein [[in a]] directly underneath said continuous region between said rows of suction openings ~~formed in said at least one suction belt.~~

Claim 2 (currently amended): The apparatus according to claim [[1]] 5, which comprises mutually parallel suction boxes

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communicating with said rows of suction openings for supplying suction air to said rows of suction openings, and a common vacuum source communicating with said suction boxes.

Claim 3 (currently amended): The apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said feed table includes a covering plate covering said suction boxes on top, said covering plate forming a guide for said ~~at least one~~ suction belt.

Claim 4 (currently amended): The apparatus according to claim 3, wherein said covering plate is formed with ~~mutually parallel~~ said rows of suction ~~openings~~ apertures and with said ventilation openings.

Claim 5 (new): An apparatus for conveying sheets to a sheet processing machine, comprising:

a feed table having mutually spaced-apart rows of suction apertures formed therein and ventilation openings formed therein in a region between said suction apertures; and

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a suction belt disposed to be guided over said feed table and having at least two mutually spaced-apart rows of suction openings formed therein, each of said rows of said suction openings aligned with a respective one of said spaced-apart rows of suction apertures.